



Black cavalrymen ride out to try to capture an Apache renegade in the cable movie "Buffalo Soldiers."

## TELEVISION

# 'Buffalo Soldiers' is compelling — not to mention long overdue

On one level, TNT's "Buffalo Soldiers" operates as a rousing Western adventure — the story of a troop of African-American cavalrymen scouring the New Mexico territory in 1880 for a band of renegade Apaches and their chief, Victorio.

On another level, "Buffalo Soldiers" (tonight at 6, 8 and 10 on TNT) is a chance to educate Americans about their own history. To let them know that not all the soldiers and cowboys were white — to let them know that blacks made contributions as well.

The buffalo soldiers themselves were recruited into the Union army during the Civil War. It took an act of Congress in 1866 to allow black soldiers to continue to serve in the army, mostly in the cavalry on the frontier.

(The term "Buffalo Soldiers" originated with the Plains Indians, apparently because they believed the soldiers' hair resembled that of the buffalos.)

Cast members — including Danny Glover, Mykelti Williamson, Glynn Turman, Michael Warren and Carl Lumbly — agreed that bringing an ignored part of our history to light was a big reason they wanted to make the movie.

"It's a tragedy in this country's history that people don't know who these men were," said Glover, who not only stars as Sgt. Washington Wyatt but is one of the movie's executive producers. "Their story is really the story of African Americans, Native Americans and this country at a remarkable moment in time."

And "Buffalo Soldiers" is, in a way, a manner of righting past wrongs.

"The tragedy of history is taking various groups of people and saying, 'You had nothing to do with this,'" said Carl Lumbly, who stars as black/Seminole scout named John Horse. "Or, more criminally, 'Your contribution, because it doesn't fit with the picture that we would like to present to you, we



**Scott Pierce**

Deseret News television editor

repeat things, like the fact that the buffalo soldiers existed, I would have teachers — very often white teachers — tell me that an active imagination is, of course, a wonderful thing for a person to have," he said.

"One of the things I learned was what a disservice this country has done to society at large with not putting our history about the black cowboy (and) about the black military man," said Michael Warren, who stars as a soldier named Tockes. "Even when I was trying to do research, I'd find these books . . . were about the white officers. It's still very difficult to find thought-provoking, compelling pieces about the men."

"Buffalo Soldiers," on the other hand, is compelling viewing. It's more than a bit rough and violent, but so were the men and the times it portrays.

The quality of the telefilm raises the question of why it took so long to get it produced. "Buffalo Soldiers" has been kicking around Hollywood for 20 years in one form or another. At various times, it was supposed to be a theatrical film — but it never got made.

And director Charles Haid said there's a simple reason for that.

"If you go to the major studios — let's take a look and see how many films they've made about the African-American experience," he said. "Basically, they don't want to make movies about this particular experience because they don't think they'll sell tickets."



Danny Glover is both the star and one of the executive producers of the made-for-cable movie.

that."

And it's not just the buffalo soldiers who get their due — so do the Indians. And that was something that was also important to the cast members, including Glynn Turman, who plays JoJu in the telefilm.

"I've watched this piece get kicked around for those 20 years in this town, and the thing that makes me so proud about being part of this particular version of 'Buffalo Soldiers' is the camaraderie, not only between the black soldiers and actors in the piece, but the wonderful, wonderful group of Native Americans in Arizona," Turman said, "who brought their own understanding, their own compassion and pride."

There's a parallel drawn between the African Americans and the Native Americans. Wyatt is as committed as the rest of the buffalo soldiers to bringing in the ren-





Ballet for seven years, dances during a Jazz dancer since 1994.

"When I think of 'The Nutcracker,' I see how it talks to all ages," Sayama said. "And like a lot of people, I feel the ballet has become a part of me. Not only because I was once in it, but because I see it every year."

*"I had no idea 'The Nutcracker' would become the thing it is today. I just thought I was doing something good by creating it. But I didn't know how big it would turn out to be. I'd like to think I did a good deed with all this."*

—William F. Christensen

● **BALLET WEST** continues its Capitol Theatre run of "The Nutcracker," Dec. 10-Dec. 31, except Sundays. Tickets range from \$10 to \$45 and are available at all ArtTix outlets or by calling 1-801-355-ARTS (2787). Evening performances begin at 7 p.m. Matinees are Dec. 13, 20, 22, 23 and 27 at 2 p.m. There will also be a special matinee Dec. 24 at noon.

The Utah Chamber Orchestra, with Terence Kern conducting, will provide the well-known Tchaikovsky score.

## Ca to

they've experienced considerable bigotry. But there's one young white boy who salutes the black men as they ride by.

"Here was this little kid in a bigoted town who salutes my charac-

By Sara Parenting

Here' at my ho year-old or less d have left which us ing his s closet an them on. "Nooc agreeabl "Come outside. walk in ti wearing

"Noooooo!" insists Charley. "I won't." Exasperated, I feel my teeth clenching.

"Everyone has to wear shoes, Charles," I say sternly.

"Noooooo!" comes the reply.

Enter my husband, Akira, fresh from the shower but presumably no better rested than I. "You don't want to wear your shoes?" he says. "Well, okay, then Daddy'll wear them." And then this usually staid, eminently reasonable 40-something ties Charley's clodhoppers to his ears and begins dancing around the living room. "I'm ready for school now. Let's go."

I watch as Charley cracks up, grabs the shoes from his father — and puts them on. After Akira ties them, Charley announces, "Ready for school now, Mommy."

As if I've just witnessed Tiger Woods shoot a hole in one, I'm dumbfounded by my husband's parenting prowess. "Wow," I think, "what a good dad." Then, softer, but definitely there, I hear another voice inside my head. This one says, "What a jerk."

Within seconds, of course, I have a more benign thought: "This is what I always said I wanted — a full partner, an engaged father, someone to carry half the load." But then I mutter inwardly, "So how come I'm feeling so annoyed when he manages to pull off one little job, one that I haven't been able to master? Could it be that I feel" — drumroll, please — "just a tad jealous?"

### Feeling expendable

There's no doubt that parenting has undergone a revolution. The dad of the '90s changes diapers, chooses clothing, attends midnight feedings and tends to middle-of-the-night terrors. You'd think we moms would be happy about it — and for the most part, we are. "I couldn't be as productive at work,

## survive rn dads?

my kids as much or have as life if my husband wasn't as ed as he is," goes an ever-popular maternal refrain. as with all progress, the es in parenting roles have a ide: As dads become more itted and adept, moms may ey're being usurped.

's hardly any wonder that presented with a man who to be at least as good at par- as we are, we cling to the al tasks that only we can plish.

abies become toddlers, how 's tougher to find refuge

and relief through biological imperatives.

But when a father does hit on a successful method, it's easier on one's pride to find fault with it than to give praise. "If my husband has more success persuading our 2-year-old daughter to submit to having her diaper changed, I think sarcastically, 'Oh, that's a great way to do it. Now it's only going to be harder for me next time,'" says Kelly McCune, a Pasadena, Calif., mother of two.

It's still tough not to be miffed when Dad — who's often had less exposure to kids and who might also have done less research and analysis of parenting methods — breezes in and accomplishes what we think we're supposed to be able to do instinctively. Yet it may be precisely that newness to the job that allows men to experiment.

### Taming the green-eyed monster

Would we really prefer a return to the days when Dad arrived on the 7:09 and hid behind the newspaper until it was time to kiss his pajama'd progeny good night? When there was little competition and conflict because mothers' and fathers' roles were so clearly defined? I don't think so — nor does any mother I've met.

But that's some trick when the domains are as free-form and ever changing as our families themselves. After all, this parenting — and partnering — business is a never-ending process. Which is, of course, the good news because just like the needs and wishes of our children, our individual abilities as parents will wax and wane. So in the meantime, I'm going to try to cut Akira a little slack and recognize that he, like many men, is finally a creative, willing partner. At the very least, I can pull the covers over my head and grab some extra sleep.

## Weather

El Niño

El Beño

El Producto

## HAPPY 70th ANNIVERSARY THAINE & PATRA TAYLOR

On December 1, 1997, Thaine and Patra Taylor celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary. They have two daughters, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. We are

